

Senior Corps Update October 1999 Edition



An update of activities and information published monthly by the National Senior Service Corps for the Senior Corps network and interested National Service colleagues

The National Senior Service Corps is part of the Corporation for National Service's network of programs which also includes AmeriCorps and Learn and Serve America

**National Senior Service Corps
Tom Endres, Director**

Fiscal Year 2000 Appropriations Action -- The House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, and Education, which supports AmeriCorps*VISTA and the National Senior Service Corps, acted on its funding bill Thursday, September 23, 1999. The funding levels for all Senior Corps programs and AmeriCorps*VISTA programs were maintained at Fiscal Year 1999 levels. However, funding for Senior Demonstrations was eliminated. The full Appropriations committee approved this bill on Thursday, September 29th.

The Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education acted on its funding bill Monday, September 27th, and the full Appropriations Committee approved the legislation on Tuesday, September 28, 1999. Funding for AmeriCorps*VISTA and the Senior Corps programs was increased to the President's requested levels. The three programs of the National Senior Service Corps were funded at a total of \$180 million, an increase of \$6 million over Fiscal Year 1999. Senior Corps Demonstration Programs were funded at \$3.1 million. AmeriCorps*VISTA received \$81 million, an increase of \$8 million. The Senior Demonstration programs were funded at \$3.1 million, and Program Administration was funded at \$29 million, the same as the Fiscal Year 1999 level.

Both the Senate and House Appropriations committees are working under extremely tight spending caps. Therefore, the funding levels for Senior Corps and VISTA in these bills are a very good outcome for both programs right now. Many Members of Congress, including Chairman Porter of the House Subcommittee, have spoken about the need for additional funding as this process moves forward. If both the House and the Senate approve these bills, the next step will be a House-Senate conference to resolve differences between the two bills. The Corporation will be encouraging Congress to enact the full amount of the President's request for Senior Corps and VISTA programs, and will be pressing for the Program Administration funds to help with technology upgrades and other management improvements.

Update of the Corporation for National Service Strategic Plan – Under the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), the Corporation is required to update and revise its strategic plan for program activities by September 2000. The current strategic plan covers the years 1997-2002 and can be found on the Corporation's web site at www.nationalservice.org in .pdf format under the "Research" Section of the main page.

SAVE THE DATES!



**NATIONAL SENIOR
SERVICE CORPS
CONFERENCE 2000**

**JUNE 22 – 23, 2000
ORLANDO, FLORIDA**

evaluation is completed and modifications have been made, the grantee will continue to be accessible to disabled persons.

- Grantees **must** provide reasonable accommodation to persons with disabilities so that they may participate in Senior Corps programs. Not all volunteer stations under a grantee need to be handicap accessible, however, a grantee must have the ability to accommodate disabled individuals and offer site placement options to a disabled volunteer. In addition, all new buildings or existing buildings with major modifications completed after May 30, 1979 must be accessible.
- Prior to selecting a grantee, Corporation State Office Project Managers complete an informal evaluation of a grant applicant's handicap accessibility. This can be done through a review of a grantee's self-assessment as provided in the grant application or through a site visit.
- Senior Corps project directors should be mindful of volunteer stations and the handicap accessibility provided.
- Corporation State Office Project Managers must conduct monitoring site visits at least once every three years. The newly revised NSSC Project Compliance Monitoring Document contains a section on Accessibility Verification, which includes questions on handicap accessibility and accessibility self-evaluations. Site visits provide excellent opportunities to observe handicap accessibility and often do not require any additional time or effort. When performing site visits, State Office Project Managers should take note of building facilities, such as parking convenience, elevators, ramps, stairs and restroom facilities. Some specific items to look for: Are parking spaces reserved for persons with disabilities? Are doors no heavier to open than a refrigerator door? Are hallways level with non-slip surfaces?

If you need further information the Corporation's Equal Opportunity Office is available to assist you. The EO Office may be reached at (202) 6065-5000, ext. 312 (voice), (202) 606-5256 (TDD), eo@cns.gov, or through www.nationalservice.org.

New Policy Issued – Maintenance of Volunteer Service Years in Foster Grandparents and Senior Companion Program Grants

Effective September 28, 1999, the Corporation approved Policy Number 850. ACTION Order 2650.1(Maintenance of Volunteer Service Years in FGP and SCP) is cancelled, and the policy provides new guidance to Corporation State Offices and Service Centers on what to do when an FGP or SCP grantee fails to maintain the number of VSYs which are specified in the Notice of Grant Award. Corporation State Office and Service Center staff can access this policy via the Corporation's Intranet, and clicking "Corporation Policy Page" on the left side of the Home Page. Senior Corps project directors with questions should contact their State Offices.

Technology Spotlight –

Developments With NSSCTALK, The Senior Corps List Serv -- NSSCTALK subscribers will soon see messages posted on the list serv to let everyone know the latest on the status of its migration from St. John's University to ETR Associates. Zachary (Zac) Mutrux, the incoming list serv administrator, is working hard behind the scenes to ensure that the transition is smooth and painless to subscribers. Senior Corps has received several queries about the reason for the change. The answer: **better customer service!**

By migrating NSSCTALK from St. John's University to ETR, we will:

- Enhance the level of administration and customer service available to subscribers;
- Integrate NSSCTALK into the system designed and supported by the Corporation for National Service for list serv administration;
- Centralize the contact point for list serv questions and assistance needed by subscribers; and
- Ensure that dedicated technical resources and expertise are available to manage the list serv.

Favorite Web Sites – Share the URL of your favorite web site(s) by posting it on NSSCTALK or sending an e-mail to **Angela Roberts** at aroberts@cns.gov. Senior Corps is compiling a master list of useful web sites to share with the entire Senior Corps network. Be sure to include ways in which you found the web site that you share helpful to you.

National Initiatives and Linking Up in Communities...

National Council on the Aging (NCOA) Medicare Information Mapping Project – is designed to document effective and future ways of disseminating information to Medicare beneficiaries. NCOA is also interested in surveying local affiliates of national organizations as a way to estimate local capacity, determine greatest needs in areas of technical assistance, and identify existing and potential partnerships. If any Senior Corps Project Directors or others are interested in participating in the Mapping Project or learning more, contact: Susana Perry, Director, Medicare Information Project, NCOA, 409 Third Street SW, Washington, DC 20024. Telephone: 202.479.1200 or online at <http://www.ncoa.org>

Neighborhood Networks – sponsored by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Neighborhood Networks is a community-based initiative launched in 1995 that encourages the development of resource and computer learning centers in HUD-assisted and/or insured housing. There are now more than 460 centers in operation, including 134 on HUD senior housing complexes. Seniors comprise the largest percentage of the total Neighborhood Networks population, and successful senior programs are a vital part of the initiative. According to the Neighborhood Networks Coordinator, “Many seniors at Neighborhood Networks centers have time, talent, and desire to volunteer or return to work.” Senior Corps projects may find their local Neighborhood Networks centers to be promising recruitment sites for volunteers. To learn more about Neighborhood Networks, including a roster of locations and communities served, visit the website at <http://www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org> or call Jennifer Eddy, Coordinator, at 703.218.2567.

Kudos to Senior Corps Colleagues and Volunteers Recognized for Excellence!

North Carolina – Congratulations to **Debbie Wellborn**, SCP Project Director and **Wanda Brooks**, FGP Project Director, both with **New River Senior Services** in **Jefferson**. They just completed an eight month course in Nonprofit Leadership and Management sponsored through the University of Wisconsin.

Funding Successes for Senior s Projects

Nevada – Las Vegas RSVP reported **\$8,000** in United Way funding to continue its telephone reassurance program for homebound seniors.

North Carolina – Coastal Care Community Action SCP in **New Bern** received **\$71,000** from a Home Care Community Block Grant.

South Dakota – The Meade County Senior Center RSVP in **Sturgis** netted **\$21,000** by serving 6,105 “Breakfasts to Bikers”, its annual fundraiser during the yearly “Black Hills Motorcycle Rally”. Approximately 50-60 RSVP assisted.

Tennessee – The United Way of Middle Tennessee awarded the **Senior Citizens FGP** in **Nashville** **\$33,000** for a two-year period in the category of “The Benefits to Seniors”, which highlights how service has a positive effect on the quality of life of seniors, and about their contributions to the community, with special emphasis on the needs of children.

Total Funding Successes Dollars Reported: \$133,000

National Senior Service Corps --- Getting Things Done

Senior Corps Volunteers and Child Literacy:

Minnesota—

- **Duluth Area RSVP** continues to generate publicity and awareness for its America Reads initiative, using its newsletter, “Senior Spotlight” as a primary vehicle. The current issue leads off with an article by the Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Human Service’s Aging Division, who describes the coming age wave and how critical senior volunteers will be to quality of life in the state. There is also a featured article about the Duluth child literacy project, its volunteer leaders, and the 64 RSVP volunteers who served during the 1998-99 school year. Sixty out of 64 tutors are returning for a second year, and the project also has 15 new volunteers being placed in classrooms.

National Senior Service Corps --- Getting Things Done

- **St. Cloud RSVP** is incorporating the asset building model into its America Reads initiative in a deliberate way, emphasizing the value of a caring adult in the life of a child. In the first six months of the year, 375 RSVP volunteers provided services to children and youth in classrooms, scouting programs, libraries, clinics, recreation programs, shelters and Head Start Centers. The volunteers served as tutors, pen pals and book buddies.

Oklahoma – In coordination with **Cleveland County RSVP** in **Norman**, Senior Centers in Cleveland and McClain Counties demonstrated support for children's literacy by collecting over 2,000 books. The books will allow each Head Start classroom to expand libraries. The total value of the donated books is \$10,712. According to RSVP Project Director Connie Meiser, "It was thrilling to see the disbelief and excitement on the faces of the teachers when they entered the room where books were stacked on six conference tables three to four rows deep." The RSVP project also received a community-based Learn and Serve America grant.

Serving Older Adults in the Community

Montana – The **Kalispell RSVP** and the local food bank teamed up to provide more seniors with surplus commodities. Many eligible seniors will not go to the food bank because of pride. However, with local AOA screening for income eligibility and RSVP helping distribute food to homes, the first day of operation had 166 seniors taking advantage of the program.

Nevada – **Las Vegas RSVP** reported that its telephone reassurance program continues to grow, with 10,000 calls made during the past six months. A core group of 60 RSVP volunteers helped more than 225 clients last year. The telephone reassurance program offers homebound seniors an opportunity to volunteer and helps connects them back to the community. United Way provided \$8,000 in funding to continue the program this year.

Senior Corps Volunteers – Getting Things Done

Michigan – **Kalamazoo RSVP** announced that the latest immunization rates for children under 24 months in the county is now 95 percent. The rate grew from 42 percent in 1994 to 92 percent in 1998. Kalamazoo RSVP volunteers are part of this successful increase, through their service in the initiative funded by the Kalamazoo County Human Services Department and the Family Independence Agency.

Minnesota – The Habitat for Humanity RSVP projects are off to a commendable start. In **Mankato**, for example, 24 volunteers are working on the Seniors for Habitat Initiative and three leaders were recruited for the project. Three houses are under construction, principally with RSVP support and labor.

Resources

Learn More About Senior Corps Project Activities -- Corporation staff, Senior Corps project directors and other interested parties can receive upon request copies of issue lists -- information about what Senior Corps projects are doing in a particular service area, organized alphabetically by state. These lists are considered ongoing works-in-progress and are not necessarily comprehensive. They include information about projects gleaned from state office's weekly reports and from projects themselves. Issue lists that are currently available

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|--------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. America Reads | 7. Public Safety | 13. Respite for Caregivers |
| 2. Community Development | 8. Mentoring | 14. Housing/Homelessness |
| 3. Environment | 9. Technology | 15. Independent Living |
| 4. Non-federal Funding | 10. Child Care | 16. Nutrition and Hunger |
| 5. Collaboration | 11. Unified State Plans | 17. Health |
| 6. Disaster Relief | 12. Intergenerational Projects | |

To receive copies of any list, please contact **Gloria Godwin**, (202) 606-5000 extension 189 or e-mail ggodwin@cns.gov

Foundation Center Online – The Foundation Center web site at www.foundationcenter.org is a tremendous and accessible resource for anyone looking for funding opportunities or conducting foundation research. The site contains several searchable databases, including grant maker information (search geographically, by name, by subject), an online library of publications and books, and an indexed series of Philanthropy News Digest, which can be searched by key word or subject.

America Counts Tutoring Roadmap—The Roadmap is an online guide that includes suggestions and materials for mathematics tutoring and mentoring programs. Included are training materials, games, children's literature and computer programs to use in tutoring sessions. The Roadmap and more information can be found online by visiting www.ed.gov/mericacount/roadmap

Generations Together, University of Pittsburgh, has a new instructional kit available, ***To Help Somebody's Child*** that focuses on older adults serving children in preschool classrooms. The instructional package includes research findings, training for older adults and training modules, team building, and a bibliography with resources and references. For additional information, including prices, please contact: Generations Together, University of Pittsburgh, 121 University Place, Suite 300, Pittsburgh, PA 15260, Telephone: 412-648-7150 or fax to 412-648-7446.

Senior Corps Update is dispatched by e-mail to Corporation State Offices on the first Friday of each month. Please continue to share with Senior Corps Project Directors and other colleagues. **Editor:** Angela Roberts, National Senior Service Corps., **202-606-5000 ext. 111** or e-mail to aroberts@cns.gov. ***Comments, ideas and suggestions welcome !***